

## Press Release

### Oldenburg High School Students Win ALTANA Special Prize in Chemistry

- **Kaja Charlotte Hammels and Tue Minh Vu from Oldenburg have won the ALTANA Special Prize in Chemistry at JUGEND GRÜNDET.**
- **With “TerraTin,” they are developing petroleum-free, biodegradable single-use packaging as an alternative to conventional plastic.**
- **The award was presented at the 2026 national finals in Stuttgart.**

**Wesel / Stuttgart, June 25, 2026** – Kaja Charlotte Hammels and Tue Minh Vu from the Altes Gymnasium Oldenburg developed the business idea “TerraTin”: single-use packaging made from wheat starch that does not contain any crude oil and is biodegradable. For this, they received the ALTANA Special Prize in Chemistry at the national finals of JUGEND GRÜNDET.

Their concept relies on wheat starch instead of plastics, aiming to reduce plastic waste in the takeout sector. The jury particularly praised the fact that “TerraTin“ combines a concrete environmental problem with chemical expertise and a well-thought-out business idea.

“TerraTin tackles the source of daily waste: single-use packaging. Kaja Charlotte Hammels and Tue Minh Vu demonstrate how chemistry can help enable sustainable solutions for everyday life,” said Dr. Kristina Keisers, Investment Manager at ALTANA AG, during the presentation of the special prize.

With this special prize, ALTANA recognizes business ideas in the field of chemistry. For the two students, the award includes a trip to Porto, Portugal, and Vigo, Spain. In Vigo, they will visit a laboratory and production facility of ALTANA’s ACTEGA division and gain insights into research, development, and production in the areas of food, beverage, and metal packaging. ACTEGA is a leading supplier of specialty coatings, printing inks, adhesives, and sealants for the packaging and printing industries. At the Vigo site, the aspiring entrepreneurs will meet Managing Director Teresa Ramos, who, together with her team in Spain, develops solutions for some of the world’s best-known beverage manufacturers. These exclusive professional insights will be complemented by an attractive accompanying program, during which the winners will explore the beautiful Galician coastal region.

#### National Finals at Porsche in Stuttgart

At the national finals on June 24 and 25, hosted by the main sponsor Porsche AG, the ten best teams of the competition year presented their business ideas. Qualifying was tougher than ever: In the 2025 / 2026 competition year, a total of 6,519 students participated in JUGEND GRÜNDET, and 1,461 business plans were submitted.

The national championship - and with it, the grand prize sponsored by Porsche AG - went to Heuwind Lagertechnik from Bruchsal. Leonie Lisa Dohn impressed the

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## Press Release

judges with a modular storage system designed to keep hay bales dry, clean, and safe.

### Young people develop solutions to real problems

Developing solutions to problems and testing their own ideas – that is the core concept of JUGEND GRÜNDET. The competition aims to inspire young people to start their own businesses and show them how to develop, plan, and present ideas. “Starting a business needs to catch on,” says Franziska Metzbour, project manager of JUGEND GRÜNDET. “We can learn from sports: There, we’re not just looking for future world champions. We support many young people, and from that, special talents emerge. That’s how it should be with entrepreneurship, too. We need to encourage young people to develop and test their ideas.”



*Click on the image to access the printable file.*

Tue Minh Vu (left) and Kaja Charlotte Hammels (center) received the ALTANA Special Prize in Chemistry from Kristina Keisers. Image credit: ALTANA AG

#### About ALTANA:

ALTANA is a global leader in true specialty chemicals. The Group offers innovative solutions for coating manufacturers, paint and plastics processors, the printing and packaging industries, the cosmetics sector, and the electrical and electronics industry. The product range includes additives, specialty coatings and adhesives, effect pigments, sealants and compounds, impregnating resins and varnishes, and testing and measuring instruments. ALTANA's four divisions, BYK, ECKART, ELANTAS, and ACTEGA, all occupy a leading position in their target markets with respect to quality, product solution expertise, innovation, and service.

Headquartered in Wesel, Germany, the ALTANA Group has 58 production facilities and 67 service and research laboratories worldwide. Throughout the Group, more than 8,000 people work to ensure the worldwide success of ALTANA. In 2025, ALTANA achieved sales of more than 3 billion euros. About 7 percent of the total sales is invested in research and development each year. Its high earning power and high growth rate make ALTANA one of the world's most innovative, fastest growing, and most profitable chemical companies.

[www.altana.com](http://www.altana.com)

#### About JUGEND GRÜNDET:

JUGEND GRÜNDET is a nationwide student competition that the Federal Ministry of Education and Research has sponsored since 2003. The Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the German States recommends participation, and schools can recognize it as a special academic achievement. Sponsors support the competition with prizes and events. The main sponsor is Porsche AG.

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In JUGEND GRÜNDET, young people take on the role of founders for one school year. In the first semester, from September through January, they develop their own business idea and write a business plan. Then, in the second semester, from February through May, they virtually run a company in a business simulation.

The best teams from the business plan phase present their business ideas at pitch events in the spring. The final takes place in June with the ten best teams of the school year. At the "Future Ideas Fair," the national winner – and thus the recipient of the grand prize – emerges.

[www.jugend-gruendet.de](http://www.jugend-gruendet.de)